

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicant would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided.

Applicant also acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claims 7 and 8 contain allowable subject matter on Page 6 of the Official Action.

Further, Applicant acknowledges that the Examiner has withdrawn claims 11-14 from consideration for being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Applicant submits that the instant amendment is proper for entry after final rejection. Applicant notes that no question of new matter nor are any new issues raised in entering the instant amendment of the claims and that no new search would be required.

Moreover, Applicant submits that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance, or at least in better form for appeal.

Accordingly, Applicant requests that the Examiner enter the instant amendment, consider the merits of the same, and indicate the allowability of the present application and each of the pending claims.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-10 will have been amended. Claims 1 and 3-14 are currently pending, with claims 11-14 being withdrawn from consideration in the Official Action dated August 16, 2007. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Without acquiescing to the propriety of the Examiner's rejection, Applicants has amended claim 10, where appropriate, in order to

more clearly recite the presently claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is improper and should be withdrawn.

In the Official Action, the Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over IGARASHI (U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0014335).

Without acquiescing to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, claim 1 has been amended solely in order to expedite prosecution of the present application, while the amendments to the language of the various dependent claims have been made to merely enhance clarity.

In this regard, Applicant notes that IGARASHI does not disclose each and every element as recited in amended claim 1.

In particular, claim 1 recites a connector including, inter alia, a header having a header body formed of an insulation material, and a plurality of header posts held on side walls of the header body, the header body having header reinforcing metal fittings which are not electrically connected to a land of a circuit board, and a cross-section of fixed portions of the header reinforcing metal fittings, when viewed in a longitudinal direction of the socket, being substantially the same as a cross-section of a terminal end of the header posts.

Applicant submits that IGARASHI lacks any disclosure of at least the above-noted combination of elements.

In setting forth the rejection, the Examiner asserts that IGARASHI discloses the presently claimed fittings. More specifically, the Examiner considers the outermost posts 28Ai on each end of the header to be equivalent to the presently claimed metal fittings. However, contrary to the Examiner's assertions, contact terminals 28Ai and 28Bi of

IGARASHI are very different structurally from the presently claimed header reinforcing metal fittings.

In this regard, one end of the contact terminals 28Ai and 28Bi are fixed to the electrode of the printed wiring board by soldering (see, paragraph [0039] of IGARASHI).

Thus, IGARASHI does not disclose at least the presently claimed header reinforcing metal fittings which are not electrically connected to a land of a circuit board, as recited in independent claim 1 (and as illustrated in the non-limiting embodiment of FIGs. 6A-6C).

In regard to the rejection of dependent claims 3-6, 9 and 10, based upon IGARASHI in view of OKURA, Applicant submits that these claims are at least patentable due to their dependencies from claim 1 for the reasons discussed supra.

Furthermore, Applicant submits that the Examiner has provided no proper reasoning for correcting the admitted deficiencies in the teachings of IGARASHI, with respect to the recitations of the dependent claims, with the teachings of OKURA. Applicant further submits that OKURA does not provide any teachings which could reasonably be characterized as curing the above-noted deficiencies in the teachings of IGARASHI. In this regard, Applicant submits that OKURA does not disclose at least the presently claimed header reinforcing metal fittings not being electrically connected to a land of a circuit board, as generally recited in claim 1.

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 in condition for allowance. With regard to dependent claims 3-10, Applicant asserts that these claims are allowable on their own merit, as well as because of

their respective dependencies from independent claim 1, which Applicant has shown to be allowable.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

SUMMARY

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests an indication to that effect. Applicant has argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied references. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants note the status of the present application as being an after final rejection and with respect to such status believes that there is a clear basis for the entry of the present amendment consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Applicants note amendments after final are not entered as a matter of right; however, Applicants submit that the present amendment does not raise the question of new matter. Moreover, the present amendment clearly places the present application in condition for allowance.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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